

section 5 enforcement actions undertaken by the Department of Justice in covered jurisdictions since 1982 that prevented election practices, such as annexation, at-large voting, and the use of multi-member districts, from being enacted to dilute minority voting strength; . . . the number of requests for declaratory judgments denied by the United States District Court for the District of Columbia; . . . the continued filing of section 2 cases that originated in covered jurisdictions; and . . . the litigation pursued by the Department of Justice since 1982 to enforce sections 4(e), 4(f)(4), and 203 of such Act to ensure that all language minority citizens have full access to the political process." In addition, those findings include, "[t]he continued evidence of racially polarized voting in each of the jurisdictions covered by the expiring provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 demonstrates that racial and language minorities remain politically vulnerable, warranting the continued protection of the Voting Rights Act of 1965."

These findings the Senate adopted in its unanimous vote for H.R. 9 and as a reauthorization measure also incorporated the statutory findings within the following provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965: section 203(a); section 4(f)(1); section 10(a); and section 202(a).

By passing the legislation, Congress has adopted and reaffirmed the detailed findings in H.R. 9. The Senate unanimously adopted these findings. Nothing inserted in the RECORD thereafter can diminish the force of those findings contained within the enacted legislation itself. As several courts have properly recognized, postpassage "legislative history" is a contradiction in terms.

Earlier today, we celebrated the reauthorization and revitalization of the Voting Rights Act when President Bush signed that bill into law. I know that many in his party are unhappy with him, but I think he did the right thing. The Voting Rights Act is one of the most important laws Congress has ever passed. I am proud to say that our democracy and our Nation have been better and richer for it.

The Voting Rights Act is the keystone in the foundation of civil rights laws and is one of the most important methods of protecting all Americans' foundational right to vote. Several generations have kept the chain of support for the Voting Rights Act unbroken, and now our generation has done its part to continue that legacy and revitalize the act.

Keeping the Voting Rights Act intact is important, but enforcing it is equally important. Now that Congress has passed this bill—and the President has signed it—it is up to the President to ensure that this law and all of its provisions are enforced fully and faithfully. I was pleased today to hear the President commit to aggressive enforcement and to defend the act from legal attacks. Article I of the Constitution provides for the Congress to write the laws, and article II provides for the President to enforce them. Congress has done its part, and now the President must do his. I commend him for

saying that he will. That was the most important thing the President said today.

The President has not always been a supporter of this important civil rights law. While Governor of Texas, President Bush fought against some of the key antidiscrimination provisions Congress just reauthorized, as noted in a front page story in today's Washington Times. Today the President acted on behalf of all Americans and did the right thing despite the backbiting and criticism within his party. I commend him.

Now his responsibility is to faithfully execute the law and aggressively enforce its provisions. I trust we will not see another after-the-fact Presidential signing statement undercutting the commitment he made today in his public statement and by signing the Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006.

The enactment of this law is a triumph for all Americans and a testament to efforts of its supporters in the House and Senate. On several occasions there were attempts by some to derail this bill. Those efforts continue. Fortunately, the findings in the act itself and the record we have built supports this important measure. We know that effective enforcement of these provisions is vital in stamping out discrimination that, unfortunately, still exists in this Nation today. As the President has acknowledged, the wound is not healed and there is more to do to protect the rights of all Americans to vote and have their votes count.

I ask unanimous consent that the signature page to which I referred be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Arlen Specter
Orrin Hatch
Chuck Grassley
Jon Kyl
Jeff Sessions
Lindsey Graham
John Cornyn
Sam Brownback
Tom Coburn

NOMINATION OF FREDERIC S. MISHKIN

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I wish to speak briefly about the nomination of Dr. Frederic Mishkin to be a Federal Reserve Governor and why I voted against him.

I do not think Professor Mishkin is the right choice for the Federal Reserve. I am not convinced that he will be an independent voice.

I met with Professor Mishkin a few weeks ago and found Professor Mishkin to be a pleasant and intelligent man. I do not question his integrity or his qualifications for the job. He has spent his entire career studying and writing about monetary policy and economics. And his passion is evident.

To me, the question is not about Professor Mishkin's qualifications but about the kind of Fed we need. I do not hold Professor Mishkin's long friendship with Chairman Bernanke against him, nor do I think he will have problems speaking his mind to the chairman when they disagree. My concern is that those disagreements will be few and far between, and that the chairman hand picked him for that reason.

More than that, I am afraid the Fed has too many people with the same background. Many Fed members have spent a great deal of time studying central bank actions, but too few have experience dealing with the real-world consequences of those actions. Even Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke recently agreed that having people with different backgrounds on the Fed is healthy, and he stated his support for the next nominee to come from the financial services industry.

However, Professor Mishkin will only continue the trend toward an ivory-tower, academic Fed. Because of that, I voted "no".

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

On January 23, 1981, in Chicago, IL, Stevie Lynch, a mentally retarded man, was attacked while walking to a friend's house. According to police, two men stopped Lynch on the street taunting him about his disability and trying to make him drink beer. They then pulled him into a passageway punching him and beating his head against the wall. Lynch suffered fractures to his skull and jaw. His disability appeared to be the sole motivation for the attack.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

THE PROBLEM WITH ILLEGAL GUNS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, over the last 10 years, there have been more than 3.7 million crimes committed with firearms in this country. That is an average of 100 violent gun crimes every day, with almost 60 percent of these violent gun crimes occurring in our Nation's major cities.